

VIDEO AGE

international

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The "H" Files

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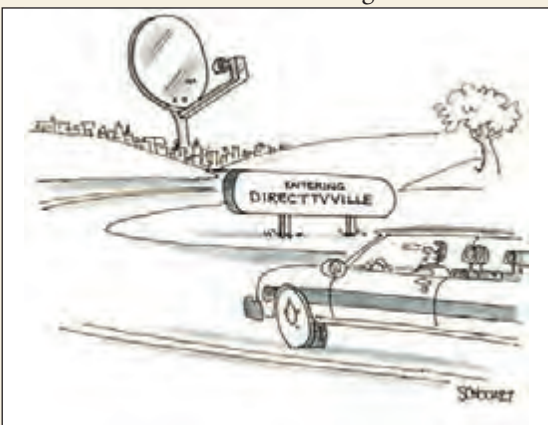
Broadband Revolution — Only With Regulation

The entertainment industry's future depends on it

BY DOM SERAFINI

On March 21, 2010, five days after U.S. regulatory agency, the FCC, announced the development of a National Broadband Plan, *The New York Times* came out with two editorials about the need to regulate broadband in the U.S. The first was by guest commentator Yochai Benkler, a professor at Harvard Law School, who basically stated that, "The FCC's new plan doesn't force broadband companies to compete."

The second piece, "A Plan for Broadband," came from the *Times'* own editorial board, and advocated more regulatory power for the FCC. Stated the



(Continued on Page 22)

The Drama of RFF Is Like Fiction

What Americans call "drama," Italians and Europeans in general refer to as "fiction." And in the case of the fourth annual Roma Fiction Fest (RFF), one cannot say whether what will unfold is clearly a drama or a work of fiction. The event is set to take place July 5-10 in Rome at its traditional three venues: Conciliazione Auditorium, Adriano Multiplex Cinema and the Lumsa University AV complex, all near the Vatican.

The drama began last November with the resignation of Piero Marrazzo as governor of the Lazio Region. Marrazzo had been the driving force behind the event.

It continued with the changing of the guard last March when Marrazzo's center-left government was replaced by a new center-right governor.

But the breaking point occurred last January, with RFF's budget cut to seven million euro (U.S. \$8.7 million) from the original nine million — 70 percent of which was supposed to come from government institutions. Subsequently, RFF's budget was further reduced to 6.5 million euro, of which 77 percent came from the Rome-based Roberto

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The Tax Incentives That (Almost) Relocated Hollywood

BY ERIN SOMERS

Los Angeles has long been the production capital of the U.S. The very word "Hollywood" evokes images of movie stars, premieres and mansions in the hills. But what if production

companies started fleeing the City of Angels in favor of Anytown, U.S.A.? Could Battle Creek, Michigan or Albuquerque, New Mexico become the Tinseltown of the future? Until recently, just such a thing was poised to happen.

Paul Audley is the president of Film L.A., a private, non-profit organization that

coordinates permits for on-location motion picture, television and commercial productions in Los Angeles. Audley and his team are the go-to guys for location permits for any movies shot in the region

(Continued on Page 24)

DISCOP Faces Mart Maturity, Budget Cuts, Buoyant Sales

BY BOB JENKINS

Despite the difficulties of the recent past, and continuing pressure on budgets, there are signs of improving conditions in Central and Eastern Europe. And DISCOP East 2010 promises to be a more buoyant event, offering lots of innovation for

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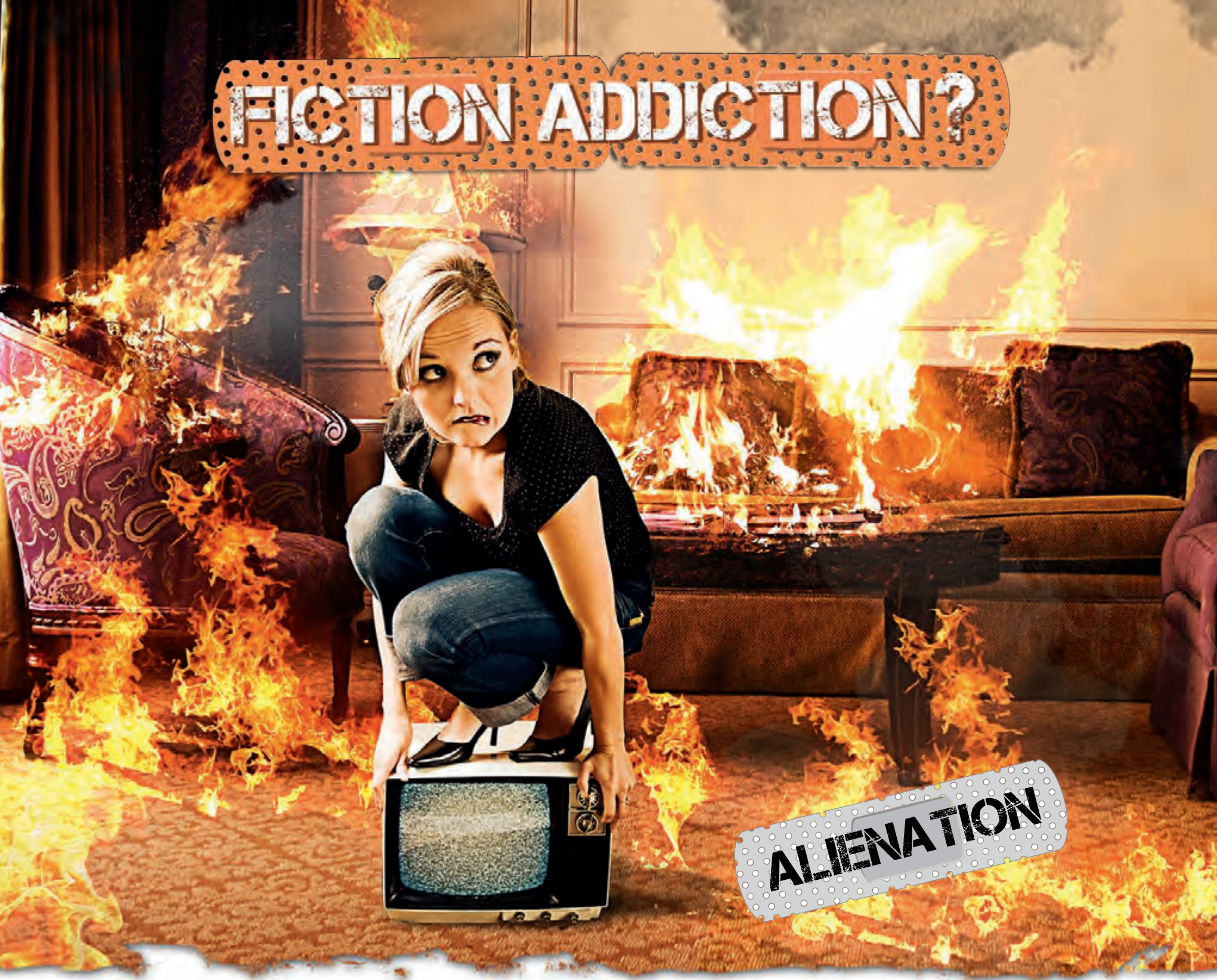
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NATPE Time In Miami Beach

A new city and a new hotel mean new challenges for NATPE participants. NATPE 2011 will be held in Miami Beach, which will offer attendees sub-tropical winter weather. The new hotel is the recently renovated Fontainebleau, a top-of-the-

line resort located in the heart of Miami Beach.

The new challenges are several: keeping costs down at a time when room rates and airline fares are at their peak; making sure buyers are not bussed away from the Fontainebleau by local distributors; creating good traffic flow with a bank of just four elevators (see photo on the right) especially considering that the lobby level is just as narrow as that of Las Vegas' THEhotel, where NATPE has been held for years; and



ensuring that tourist interference is kept to a minimum.

Fortunately, the tower reserved for

NATPE's exhibitors, called Tresor (see photo below), has its own entrance right on Collins Avenue, which will help participants avoid mingling with the "snow birds," as tourists are called in Florida.

Problems might arise when participants want to go to the registration and conference areas (where the magazine bins are also located), which are on the opposite side of the hotel, forcing them to pass through the main entrance and across the large hall with shops and restaurants that are connected the hotel's various sides and thus in close contacts with tourists.

But there will be many mitigating factors. To discourage bussing there is the normally horrendous traffic, which will encourage even local distributors to sleep at the Fontainebleau rather than venture home. Also, most of the flights will be direct, which will be a great relief for many NATPE participants who in the past had to connect at least once to reach Las Vegas.

Finally, since the Fontainebleau is not within walking distance to anywhere, most of the participants will be hanging around the premises.



THR Out Of The Trade Biz

According to *The Los Angeles Times*, by tapping former celebrity consumer magazine *US Weekly* editor Janice Min as its new editorial director, *The Hollywood Reporter* is going to be transformed "from a trade to a slick weekly."

THR was one of seven trade publications, including *Billboard* and *Backstage* acquired — for a total sum that was less than what just *THR* was sold for by its founding family — last December by E5 Global Media for Nielsen Business Media, a consortium of investors led by James Finkelstein.

The *Times* paraphrased Richard Beckman, E5's CEO, as saying, "Although E5 still wants the *Reporter* to break news online every day, a weekly magazine aimed at a larger audience of upscale influencers could allow it to

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Peter Keefe: 1952-2010

Producer Peter Keefe, 58, most noted as the creative force behind the children’s animated TV series *Voltron*, passed away on May 27. Keefe succumbed to throat cancer at the home of his sister Mollie in Rochester, New York, where he was born.

Keefe is survived by his wife Pamela; his stepson, James; his mother Anne, a former KMOX (St. Louis) radio talk show host; and five siblings.

In the mid-1980s, Keefe adapted two distinct Japanese animated series (*Go Lion* and *Dierugger*) into a single storyline that became a kids entertainment phenomenon — *Voltron*. Debuting in U.S. syndication in 1984, *Voltron*:

Defender of the Universe rose to become the number one series in kids’ syndication during the 1984 and 1985 broadcast seasons. It is also considered the first Japanese anim  series to be adapted for the U.S. and global market (the series was broadcast in more than 100 countries worldwide).

After *Voltron*, Keefe created what industry analysts regard as the first successful U.S.-French animated co-production with *Denver the Last Dinosaur*. Created entirely by Keefe, the cartoon series premiered in U.S. syndication in 1988. Airing in over 90 countries, *Denver the Last Dinosaur* became another global hit for Keefe.

In 1989, Keefe co-founded Zodiac Entertainment, a New York City-based joint venture with the U.K.’s Central Independent Television. Under the Zodiac banner, Keefe created and produced three multi award-winning animated



series, including *Widget*, *The Mr. Bogus Show* and *Twinkle*. Keefe’s *Widget* has been hailed as the first animated series to blend entertainment with pro-social and environmental messages aimed at children. All three of the Zodiac animated series have earned awards from such distinguished organizations as the National Educational Association.

Keefe’s other high-profile accomplishments include serving as producer of *Nine Dog Christmas*, a 2005 animated holiday special that was broadcast on Cartoon Network in the U.S., and the Disney Channel in Europe and Asia. Warner Home Video released the special worldwide to the home entertainment market.

His most recent creation, currently in development, is *Z-Force (Zodiac Force)*, an animated series that features 12 action heroes and is based on the ancient Oriental Zodiac.

A master pitchman, Keefe distinguished himself not only for his creative and marketing savvy, but also for his trademark black handlebar mustache, long blond hair and cowboy boots, and his rich vocabulary.

Over the last two decades, Keefe created, produced and sold over 600 half hours of award winning children’s and family entertainment programming both in the U.S. and internationally.

Keefe began his career in television entertainment as an on-camera movie critic for the public television outlet in St. Louis. He switched gears from talent to producer in 1983 as vp and executive producer for World Events Productions, which was also based in St. Louis.

Famous quotes

Look, can we get this straight: It’s football, OK? Football. Not soccer.

A.A. Gill in *Vanity Fair*, June 2010

Editorially speaking, this publication will no longer refer to football with the derogatory moniker of “soccer,” and what in the U.S. media is wrongly called “football,” we’ll refer to as “American football.”

VideoAge, January 2010

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Marketing Mart Puts TV Back On Its Agenda

Promax, the venerable convention for media marketing people, has changed venue. This year, its main annual event is moving from its traditional New York City's mid-town spot, to the downtown of Los Angeles at the JW Marriott and L.A. Live complex. The new location promises little improvement as far as traffic jams are concerned, and as for panoramic view, participants will be staring at Highway 110 from the whole duration of the event, which is taking place June 22-24.

Much improvement, however, is expected as far as the focus of the event is concerned, with television back on its agenda and many top TV executives among its panelists, speakers and moderators.

Looking at the program schedule of Promax 2010, virtually all major TV organizations are represented, including USA Network, HBO, Fox International Channels, History Channel and Nickelodeon. Plus, it will have speakers such as Ed Wilson, president of Tribune Broadcasting; John Miller, CMO of NBCUniversal TV Group; Peter Liguori, COO of Discovery Communications and Michael Benson, evp marketing at ABC Entertainment.

Being in Los Angeles, Promax organizers are even making the event more glamorous by bestowing the Lifetime Achievement Award to Playboy's founder Hugh Hefner. Possibly as a sign of gratitude, Playboy has opened its Mansion to selected Promax guests for the event's opening party on the evening before the convention opening day.

The only problem that will be confronting Promax participants is that it sits around at least five other television-related events: The first, in Monte Carlo, ends June 10 (Monte Carlo TV Festival); the second in Banff, Canada (Banff World TV Festival), concludes June 16; the third in São Paulo, Brazil (Brasil TV Forum), finishes on June 17; the fourth in Budapest, Hungary (DISCOP), ends on June 25; and the fifth, in Rome, Italy (Rome Fiction Fest), starts July 5. And this without considering the Licensing Show, which this year moved to Las



This year's edition is held at the JW Marriott in downtown Los Angeles

Vegas (also from New York City) and winds down on June 10.

It's clear that American, European, Asian and Latin American TV executives will have to make a choice, since it would be impossible to attend more than one TV trade event, no matter how different they might be.

So, what is Promax putting on the delegates' table than the other events will not be offering? First could be "sex" with the Playboy Mansion party opportunity. Second, "money," with sessions about both saving and making money through marketing. Thirdly, "sports."

According to a representative from Promax, the event has a number of unique qualities to distinguish itself. "It's the only event that focuses specifically on entertainment marketing, promotion and design," he said, "It is an opportunity for the marketing and design community within the television industry to network, share best practices, learn about the latest technologies, celebrate excellent work and hear from industry leaders."

The move to L.A. is the latest of a string of attempts by Promax president Jonathan Block-Verk to recover from the slump that began under his predecessor, Glynn Brailsford. But, with upwards of 70 speakers and around 50 seminars and sessions to attend, the market appears poised to be a somewhat successful one. Seminar topics are diverse, and range from 3D TV to remaining relevant in the job market to incorporating comedy into marketing and promotions. Naturally,

a number of panels will address the persisting issue of digital media and the Internet, with sessions like "Inventions in the New Age of Engagement," which will tackle social networking sites.

Promax won't be all work and no play, however. A promax rep promised *VideoAge* a host of parties off the hotel premises, including an Elite Member bash at the aforementioned Playboy Mansion. What better place to talk about marketing than in Hugh Hefner's famous grotto?

More fun should come in the form of a Speed Dating networking function on the evening of Day One, which promises to put a new spin on schmoozing. A select number of clients will get a chance to meet agency heads in a series of eight-

minute one-on-one capabilities pitches at cabaret-style tables for four.

If there's one thing that Promax organizers have always delivered, it's star power. Last year's conference saw Robert Redford accept a Lifetime Achievement award, and the two previous markets boasted Vince McMahon and Bill Clinton. This year, in addition to Hugh Hefner, attendees can look forward to a speech from Larry King and a Q&A with legendary boxer Sugar Ray Leonard, hosted by HBO Sports president Ross Greenburg.

In addition to a session of verbal sparring with Sugar Ray, Promax has other sports oriented fare on tap. A panel titled "Best in Sports Marketing" will be hosted by Bill Bergofin, SVP of Marketing and Promotion at Versus and presented by the Sports Media Marketing Awards.

The market will also play host to two award ceremonies. The North America and World Gold Promotion, Marketing and Design finalists will be recognized over two nights (June 22 for design, June 24 for marketing) and a winner will be announced for each category.

Promax 2010 is also unveiling two brand-new events: the Creative Educators Forum and Promax Bootcamp. The Creative Educators Forum is aimed at media instructors at undergraduate and graduate levels and is designed to, according to organizers, "help [them] better prepare their students for careers in entertainment media and marketing."

Bootcamp, meanwhile, is an intensive two-day professional development workshop focused on helping enhance technical, creative and cognitive skills for success in the world of television promotions. It will take place simultaneously with Promax proper, and feature speakers such as Fox Broadcasting SVP of marketing Laurel Bernard, CNN VP of On-Air Promotions Drea Besch, Tooth+Nail creative director Linda Button and more. Bootcamp recruits will attend workshops on creative writing, editing, presenting and promo structure, among other topics. ●



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Big Studios' Output Cuts Further into Indies' Wallets

The 2010 upfronts in New York City, which led into the Los Angeles Screenings, have this year been characterized by six major elements:

1. A record number of primetime pilots picked up by U.S. networks. This was due in large part to copious cancellations, and NBC wisely restoring its 10 p.m. slot. Out of 90 pilots for the 2010-2011 prime-time TV season, the five major U.S. broadcast networks picked 42, of which there were 14 comedies and 21 dramas, three dramedies, three reality shows and one animated series. In addition, the major U.S. cable networks have cumulatively ordered six new dramas, three comedies, one dramedy, one cartoon and 10 reality shows. All that makes for a total of 63 new shows, a record 70 percent pick up.

2. The return of NBC as a large consumer of scripted shows. NBC spent 40 percent more than usual (an estimated total of \$50 million) in development for the next season's new shows, bringing in 12 new programs. The network wanted to show restored stability after suffering through a two-year roller coaster ride with the writers' strike, a reduced pilot order and the decision to forego an upfront (substituted by something like an "infront"



Telefe's Meca Salado Pizarro, Julian Rodriguez Montero, Michelle Wasserman, Alejandro Parra, Marisa Badia, Axel Kuschevatzky, Jessica Stescobich, Victor Vega at the traditional Telefe cocktail party

or private meetings with advertisers) and Jay Leno's failed 10 p.m. experiment.

3. Big changes for CBS following a wave of series cancellations. For the first time in more than 40 years the network will run back-to-back comedies in the 8 p.m. slot on Thursdays. CBS' Kelly Kahl described the network strategy as "aggressive stability." Controversy is nevertheless creeping in. For its comedy *\$#! My Dad Says* (distributed by Warner Bros. and starring William Shatner), the expletive is written in unpronounceable characters, but uttered as "bleep."

The Parents Television Council has denounced CBS for inserting the curse word into the title.

4. While CBS refreshed its 8 p.m. slot, ABC opted to attack the 10 p.m. time period with more comedies (a total of six new ones), and event television.

5. The 1980s are back on U.S. broadcast TV with updated versions of shows such as *Dallas* (*Lonestar* on FOX); *Hawaii Five-O* (on CBS); *Quincy, M.E.* (*Body of Proof* on ABC), and stars such as Jim Belushi (*The Defenders*, CBS), Tom Selleck (*Blue Bloods*, CBS) and the



AETN's Christine Van Schoick, Mayra Bracer, Sean Cohan

forementioned William Shatner. Plus, it's clear that crime and courtrooms still fascinate U.S. net execs while doctors and hospitals are losing their appeal.

6. The show part of show business was back with lavish parties at both the upfronts and the L.A. Screenings. Plus, viewers are returning to the "boob-tube." According to FOX's Jon Nesvig, 80 percent of TV shows are still watched live.

As far as the New York upfronts — where the nets announced their new season's series to their advertising clients — were concerned, it is estimated that this year the five broadcast TV networks will generate something like \$9 billion in their inventory pre-sale. This compares to \$7.4 billion at the 2009 upfronts. Last year, the five major broadcast networks took in about \$1.5 billion less than the previous year, because of the recession. "We know you have money this year," joked comedian Jimmy Kimmel at the ABC upfronts at Lincoln Center.

This time the networks will ultimately pre-sell more inventory (around 80 percent) and will be looking at a 15 percent rate increase (most likely they'll get nine). Last year, most nets sold less inventory at the upfronts, leaving more air time for later scatter sales, which proved to be a fortunate move since the economy picked up late in the year and commercial rates improved.

The upfronts are not only for broadcast

(Continued on Page 12)



NBC Universal International TV Distribution's Belinda Menendez, Maria Sanchez, Tamara Misert



CBS Studios International's Armando Nuñez, Joe Lucas, Barry Chamberlain

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L.A. Screenings (continued)

(Continued from Page 10)

TV networks, but for cable nets, as well, and sister stations TBS and TNT want the world to know that they're big too. Consequently, they also made presentations to advertising clients along with the big five nets. They announced three new comedies (one animated) and two new dramas.

by becoming a two-tier model with advertising and cable operators paying to retransmit programs. This is similar to the model used by cable nets, wherein revenues are generated by the per-sub fee and advertising.

Moving on to the L.A. Screenings — an event for international program acquisition executives that follows the upfronts — a total of 67 international distributors set up shop at the hotels in the Century City section of Los Angeles (including the U.S. studios' Latin American divisions). In addition, five companies screened in their offices and an additional five hung around the hotel lobbies.

For the independents, the Screenings kicked off on May 18 and virtually ended on Saturday, May 22, while the studios began screening on Friday, May 21, and finished on the 28th. The large studio output meant that buyers were kept on the lots from morning to late afternoon, thus offering little chance to visit indies.

As per last year, the indies' kick-off party was care of Venevision International on May 19, while the closing ceremony was covered by Telefilms' May 22 afternoon screening and cocktail, and Telefe's evening party



Teletica's Jorge Garro

that same night.

For the studios, Disney started the celebrations with a presentation and party on its lot on Sunday, May 23. This was followed by a cocktail held by Lionsgate on Monday, and competing NBC Universal and Warner Bros. parties on Tuesday evening. The studios closed the 2010 L.A. Screenings with 20th Century Fox 75th anniversary party on Thursday, May 27.

For those Latin buyers who arrived earlier to meet with some of the indies, it meant that their stay lasted over 10 days, versus three for Canadians and six for buyers from other parts of the world.

In addition to some buyers grumbling about the length of their stay, some Latin buyers complained about the glut of telenovelas now on the market, with new

productions coming out of Germany, Malaysia, Israel, the U.S. and, naturally, Latin America. Nonetheless, sales went well for a few independent exhibitors with appointments and even for those relying on walk-ins. One distributor even reported a \$100,000 sale to a wandering Turkish buyer.

Jose "Pepe" Echegaray, the Miami, Florida-based vp of International Sales, Latin America for Britain's Power Corp., reported that for his company, the Screenings were productive, though quiet. "The overall assessment," he said, "was that while the market was positive, it was a bit slow. The additional studio afternoon screenings limited the already shorter time independents have with clients, which made it even more restrictive." Echegaray noted that while he had fewer meetings and more down time than in years past,



M6's Bernard Majani and Twentieth Century Fox's Gerard Grant at the Fox studios bash

he found buyers, as a whole, to be more decisive than usual. "Some territories were not wasting time, they made selections of product in preproduction without even viewing a trailer," he said, "Selections were made from the brochures."

Some buyers reported being very impressed by the pilot episodes from CBS, Disney, NBC-Universal and Fox, but they also wondered aloud how many shows will actually become successful considering this year's unusually large number of new series.

In terms of numbers, at these L.A. Screenings there were some 1,400 buyers (300 more than last year) from 70 countries. Some buyers said that they will be acquiring additional shows to keep as back-ups in case their prime choices don't work in their territories or will be cancelled by the U.S. TV networks.

Finally, even though some networks ordered series from competing studios (like, for example Disney selling to CBS and Fox selling to ABC), and indie company Lionsgate is producing for FOX, most new series are produced by the networks' studios: Disney for ABC, CBS for CBS, NBC-Universal for NBC and Fox for FOX.

On the other hand, this year Sony Pictures produced for ABC and CW, and Warner Bros. for all networks except FOX. ●



Disney Media Distribution's Fernando Barbosa, Fabiola Bovino, Henri Ringel, Jack Morera, Leonardo Aranguibel



Lionsgate's Kevin Beggs (r.) with Charlie Mars, Mary-Louise Parker, Will Arnett, Mitch Hurwitz

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DISCOP

(Continued from Cover)

those who have survived the economic tsunami.

There is no escaping the fact that, along with the rest of the world, many of the economies of Central and Eastern Europe have had a torrid time over the past two years or so. And, again as has happened globally, television has experienced its share of the financial pain.

Equally, there is also no escaping the fact that, however troubled the recent past may have been, television remains, by some considerable margin, the region's dominant medium.

According to ZenithOptimedia, one of the world's largest ad agencies, in 2008 (the most recent year for which figures are available) the total advertising spend in all the DISCOP East countries was U.S.\$33.656 billion, of which television took a whopping 53.3 percent — more than three times the take of its nearest rival medium, newspapers, which only managed 16.1 percent of the advertising pot. In some countries, such as Slovakia, Zenith reported that television's share hit a massive 78.9 percent, and that's still not its most dominant market in the region, a title claimed by Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the medium claimed 86.4 percent of all advertising expenditure.

So, it is easy to see why, despite all the recent problems, an estimated 1,300 delegates will be gathering in Budapest for the 18th DISCOP East.

Nonetheless, some U.S. companies, like Sesame Workshop, CableReady and Utah-based distribution company Dominique Paul Mougnot amongst them, will not make it back this year, with most being reluctant to discuss the reasons. However, Renee Mascara, vp, International Distribution at Sesame Workshop, was open enough to admit that her absence from DISCOP East was purely a budgetary

Q&A with DISCOP's Patrick Jucaud

VideoAge International: What's new at the market this year?

Patrick Jucaud: Since last year's DISCOP East, the region has seen the launch of a staggering 51 new channels and television platforms. Which is why 36 of these new channels and platforms will be here at this year's DISCOP, and [at press time] discussions were ongoing with all the others.

VAI: What are the organizers doing to help exhibiting companies save money?

PJ: We have considerably improved the quality of all of our pre-market organizational services in order to allow our participants to add at least two hours worth of meetings per each market day. We have also increased the number of low-cost exhibits. We have brought together two new national pavilions that were not at DISCOP East last year, one from Argentina and another one from Serbia, in order to help independent producers attend our market. Also, it is important to note that this is the fourth consecutive year that we have not increased our prices.

VAI: What are organizers doing to help exhibitors make money and promote their products this year?

PJ: We will be launching DISCOP Tube, a free online video library open to content buyers representing distribution platforms across Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa. The DISCOP Tube online video library will showcase content offered at the various DISCOP markets and will be accessible all year round via DISCOP's website. During the markets themselves, buyers will be able to access the DISCOP Tube platform in a restricted lounge open at all times during the course of the three-day market.

VAI: In your view, which regions will be increasing their presence this year?

PJ: We'll see Turkey as becoming a major player in Central and Eastern Europe, both as a growingly important supplier of dramas and as a country with many television operators ready to acquire content from companies attending DISCOP East18. Turkey will also host our DISCOP East 18 Welcome Party.

VAI: How has the Budapest location worked for DISCOP? Have you ever considered making it an itinerant market and holding it in other locations in Eastern Europe such as Romania or Bulgaria?

PJ: We are very happy with Budapest and 95 percent of our participants are happy with the venue that we will be using for the 18th year now. We have often considered changing the location but we have always come back to the golden principle in our business: "Don't change a venue that works".

matter. "We are huge fans of DISCOP East," she enthused, "And we have always had a very successful market." Underlining that point, Mascara pointed to the success she had at DISCOP East in placing Sesame branded blocks in many countries, including Poland, Romania and Moldova.

Despite this success Mascara admitted, "Like many other media companies we have had to review our budgets and make some tough choices for this year, but, budgets permitting, we would love to be back again in 2011."

But, as with every year, there are

new faces at DISCOP East 2010. British format and light entertainment specialist, Hat Trick International, will be attending with a viewing box for the first time. Director of Sales Sarah Tong explained: "Central and Eastern Europe is becoming more important to Hat Trick International as our programming has been selling very well in the region lately, we also discussed the importance of DISCOP with other distributors, and the success they have historically had here, which is why we have decided to come this year."

Much the same reasoning has attracted China's Fantawild Animation to DISCOP East for the very first time. "In the past," explained Sales director Daisy Shang, "Our programming has sold mostly in Asia and the Middle East, but recently we have started to have success in the C.I.S. (the Commonwealth of Independent States, formerly the Soviet Union) and so we have decided to attend DISCOP East. It enjoys great popularity amongst the Eastern European content industry, and so it seemed to us to be the best place to develop long-term relationships in the region."

The appearance of new companies at a market is always a positive sign, and there are other indications that things might be looking up.

Axel Bohm, Regional Sales director and International Fiction Acquisitions for Germany's SevenOne accepted that the recession has had a big impact over the past 24 months, but insisted, "There are signs of improvement. Several channels in Central and Eastern Europe are performing more strongly than last year, and the Russian ad market is definitely picking up again." And, while he is also adamant that, "There is definitely a demand for fresh ideas and high quality," he went on to caution that, "Buyers, however, are quite risk-averse in their choices, preferring to rely on shows with proven international track records. And they also want cost effective shows with reduced budgets, which is one reason why so many regional broadcasters are currently so keen on stripped shows."

Of course, telenovelas have been popular in the Central and Eastern Europe region for some time, reflecting the regional importance of the female

(Continued on Page 26)



Record TV's Delmar Andrade in his suite



IL COMMISSARIO REX È A ROMA.
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Il detective dal fiuto infallibile sarà presente in peli e ossa al RomaFictionFest nella Multisala Adriano per sfilare sul primo dog carpet della storia. A seguire, la proiezione in sala di un episodio della serie inedito in Italia. Venite anche voi a ululare di passione.

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Italy Celebrates Drama With A Fest And Mart

For the fourth year in a row, Rome will be the scene of fiction activity for five days in July at RomaFictionFest. The 2010 edition of the event will take place Monday, July 5 through Saturday, July 10 at venues throughout the city. Created by the Fondazione Roberto Rossellini per l'Audiovisivo and supported by the Lazio Region (where Rome is located), the Italian Television Producers Association and the Chamber of Commerce in Rome, the fest encompasses a variety of activities, including a competition and business-oriented Industry Week, to be directed by British TV executive Antony Root.

RomaFictionFest events will be scattered throughout a number of venues this year, including Adriano Multiscreen Cinema, the Auditorium Conciliazione, Lumsa University and the Fiction Village. This latter location, the Fiction Village, is new this year, and promises to inject some fun into the market. The Village, which will be set up in the gardens of Castel Sant'Angelo, will include an open-air set where attendees can try their hand at filmmaking. Participants will get a chance to get a taste for all the professions involved in putting together a top notch fiction production, including direction, dubbing, editing, make-up artistry and more.

All venues are near the Vatican and easily reachable on foot. Cities like Rome present a great challenge to festival and market organizers, not only for the numerous distractions offered to participants, but also for logistical reasons. Fortunately for the RomaFictionFest, once registrants reach the Multisala Adriano for accreditation, they are only a short walking distance to the other festival locations.

For those who are headed to RomaFiction for strictly business purposes, there is Industry Week. According to organizers, Industry Week aims to concentrate on the opportunities, rather than the challenges of the entertainment business. Thus, the event is designed to create networking occasions for professionals. Industry



Pictured above: the entrance to the fest's headquarters.

Pictured right: LL Cool J at the RFF June press conference. The actor stars in NCIS Los Angeles and is one of the Rome event's guest stars.



Week is made up of two components: RomaTvScreenings and RomaTvPitching. The Screenings portion will kick things off, with activities on July 5 and 6. Over the course of two days, buyers and programming executives from around the world will have a chance to preview more than 50 new Italian fiction productions. New to the Screenings this year are the "Doing Business With..." panels, which will focus on the opportunities for sales and co-productions in specific countries and regions.

The second half of Industry Week, RomaTvPitching, begins July 7 and lasts through July 8. The event will provide a first look at projects in development to acquisitions and co-production executives and commissioning editors. The programs previewed will all be projects that found funding through the

fest's Pitching Competition and Speed Dating sessions.

RomaTvPitching will also include a competition portion, in which finalists from categories including Continuing Series, Serials, Comedy, TV Movies and TV Miniseries will vie for the award for Best Overall Pitch. A five-member international jury will preside over the top ten projects, and before the final round, Canadian Pat Ferns, director of RomaTvPitching, will teach a master class to prepare contestants.

Producers will also have a chance to meet up with broadcasters during Speed Dating, a networking event that gives hopefuls 15 minutes to pitch their products to each executive. One Speed Dating event will take place on both Wednesday the 7th and Thursday the 8th.

Where the festival is concerned,



CSI's Marg Helgenberger is one of the stars in attendance at the 2010 edition.

entries are judged as either Italian or international projects. The International Competition covers three categories, TV Drama, TV Comedy and Factual. For its part, the Italian Competition — the Fiction Italiana Edità — awards prizes in the categories of TV Movie, Miniseries, Continuing Series, Documentary and Docufiction. Both juries will be made up of industry professional selected by the event's artistic director.

In addition to the regular prizes, a special prize, the RomaFictionFest Award for Artistic Excellence will be awarded to Andy Garcia, for his work as an actor, producer, director and composer/musician. Garcia made his directorial debut with *The Lost City*, and has since gone on to produce such movies as 2010's *City Island*, which won the Audience Award at the Tribeca Film Festival. Additionally, Garcia was nominated for an Academy Award and a Golden Globe for his supporting role in *The Godfather*.

Other special prizes will include the TV Sorris e Canzoni Award, which will recognize excellence in Italian TV drama. A jury made up of readers of *Sorrisi e Canzoni* magazine will select winners in for best actor and actress across a variety of categories.

Evening activities will also abound all week long. An impressive roster of stars will be on hand, as will prominent television composers. Plus, up and coming musical acts will be giving live performances. And if attendees don't already have their hands full with Industry Week and the festival, they can pop into one of the screenings of classic TV programs that will be going on throughout the event, or learn to fight like an on-screen hero at a fencing class taught by Arms Master of Italian cinema, Renzo Musumeci Greco. Additionally, Mediaset and RAI will be jointly hosting a reception on Tuesday, July 6 in honor of the "business" crowd. Opening festivities will be ABC Studios' *Body of Proof*. ●

Information as of June 25



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The World's Oldest TV Fest Gets All Charged Up

This year Prix Italia will kick off its traditional fall TV festival activities September 19-24 in Turin, Italy. Now in its 62nd edition, the festival cum conference is organized by RAI, Italy's state-owned public broadcaster.

Prix Italia's venue, which rotates among the country's historic cities, will return to Torino for the second year in a row, and will be coming back to the city in 2011 as well. The event will once again play host to a variety of activities, including a competition for radio, TV and Web programming and RAI's new autumn TV season's previews. This year, the festival will be based out of three venues — RAI headquarters, Radio Edifice and the Arturo Toscanini Auditorium — and will be open to the public. Screenings will also be held in the Teatro Gobetti.

Prix Italia boasts a membership of 90 radio and television broadcasters from 48 countries. New to the organization this year are two Italian broadcasters, La 7 and Radio 24, as well as representatives from two new foreign countries: Mexico and Egypt. Regarding attendance, Mara De Angelis, the association's press consultant, said, "We are expecting to have 500 attendees, between jurors, delegates from our 90 international members, panelists for the meetings, Italian and foreign press and observers."

Where the competition is concerned, three prizes will be awarded for radio, three for television, and one for the Web. The Web Prize, which honors the best website related to a radio or TV program, became a permanent category in 2000. Seven international juries made up of directors, producers, broadcasting executives and academics will judge the submissions, of which there are 244. In previous years, Prix Italia laurels have gone to such entertainment greats as Federico Fellini, Werner Herzog, Samuel Beckett, Ingmar Bergman, Harold Pinter and many other historical notables.

As a supplement to the regular competition, a handful of special prizes will also be awarded. The Special Prize



Pictured on top: the National RAI Symphony Orchestra performing at the 2009 Opening Ceremony. Pictured above: Toscanini Auditorium set up for the event.

Offered by the President of the Italian Republic, which made its debut in 2004, will recognize a TV program that examines social issues affecting women, younger generations or the underprivileged. Another Special Prize centers on the theme "Communication for Life — Programs That Bring About Social Change," and will be awarded to a show that deals with economic, social and political realities in emergency situations. Finally, in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Unification of Italy, a Special Prize, exclusive to the

2010 edition, will honor a documentary, docu-drama or drama that best portrays the image of Italy to the world.

In addition to the competition, attendees can look forward to a variety of panels, meetings and seminars featuring industry professionals. Notable speakers and panelist will include Paolo Garimberti, chairman of RAI; Christy Carpenter, executive vice president and COO at the New York City-based The Paley Center for Media; Welsh director Peter Greenaway; Italian composer Roman Vlad; Eva Hamilton, director



Above: SVT's Eva Hamilton. Below: the Gobetti theater, one of the Prix venues.



general of Sweden's SVT and Prix Italia president; Tunisian Slaheddine Maoui, director general ASBU, Arab State Broadcasting Union based in Tunis.

Seminars will be based around the theme of Prix Italia 2010, which is "Future Preview." According to organizers the theme will address "information sources and new technologies." Panels that will tackle the technology theme include "The New Frontiers of Television and Media," which will be held Thursday, September 23, and include presentations by the RAI Research Centre and the Politecnico di Torino applied science facilities. Additionally, an international meeting on Wednesday, September 22, titled "Sources of Information — Plurality, Reliability and Responsibility" will raise questions about the reliability of information and news in the Internet age.

Prix Italia won't be all serious discourse, though. A number of screenings, premieres and cultural activities promise to keep the mood celebratory. The evening of Monday the 20th will be dedicated to director Peter Greenaway, the winner of the 1991 Prix Italia prize. The director's award-winning film, *TV Dante*, will screen that evening. Wednesday night, the National RAI Symphony Orchestra conducted by British Maestro Sir Andrew Davis will liven up the opening ceremony. Other evening celebrations throughout the week will pay tribute to famed Swedish director Ingmar Bergman as well as French actress Isabelle Adjani with screenings of their work. The event will close on the evening of Friday, September 24 with the presentation of winning programs, which will be broadcast on RAI 1. ●

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The Drama of Roma Fiction

(Continued from Cover)

Rossellini Foundation (RRF), RFF's new parent organization.

And as if this weren't enough, in early May, the Fest lost control of its domain name (now partially restored) and website (however, contacts were maintained through www.fondazionerossellini.it).

Now let's move on to what seems like fiction, and is even stranger than the drama. Marrazzo, a former TV journalist with state broadcaster RAI, was caught visiting transsexual prostitutes, at times using resources from the Lazio Region.

The scandal grew when some of those prostitutes were found dead because of their involvement with drugs, and when a group of police officers were arrested for blackmailing the governor and allegedly killing the prostitutes and their pimp.

Marrazzo's resignation brought about a premature end to the career of a brilliant politician (who might have one day become Italy's Prime Minister if it weren't for a temporary loss of judgment), and a prosperous future for RFF, which could very well become the Italian audiovisual industry's replacement for MIFED, a film-TV market held in Milan until 2004, when it ceased operation due to the incompetence of the executives who ran it on behalf of the Milan Fair.

However, all that turmoil could still be contained if weren't for the crisis which the Italian television industry is currently experiencing, with RAI in the midst of budget cuts, restructuring

divisions and changing the board of directors of several of its subsidiaries, and private broadcaster Mediaset in the middle of a tug-of-war with Rupert Murdoch's Sky Italia. To all of this, one has to add 50 percent reduction (about 10.7 million euro) of annual state subsidies to art and culture, with up to 232 cultural entities completely cut off from subsidies, including Rome's Center of Experimental Cinematography.

Nonetheless, the show must go on, and RFF organizers were out in full force in Cannes for a promotional blitz during MIP-TV, which included a well-attended party at the Majestic Hotel's beach restaurant and a front cover story in a Daily edition of *VideoAge*. RFF also received the full endorsement of the 50 Italian entertainment companies present at MIP-TV.

With a center-right administration in the Lazio Region, which was intent on cutting budgets for "extravaganzas" such



as RFF, the event's base moved from the Region to the Rossellini Foundation and with it some of the top-level executives close to Marrazzo. But there was some shuffling of personnel, with Carlo Machitella now in charge of publications, while the "Industry" or trade section of RFF is now under the leadership of Britain's Antony (correct spelling) Root, a former BBC executive. Steve Della Casa remains the Festival's artistic director. Michele Misuraca, former press spokesperson for Marrazzo (when he was governor), and now director of RRF and RFF's general manager, said that RFF is supported by the Rome Chamber of Commerce and the APT (Italy's Television Producers Association), with the cooperation of ICE, the Italian Trade Commission, plus private enterprises such as BMW, a main sponsor of the event.

Last January in New York City, Francesco Gesualdi, chairman of RRF, announced that the stars of Disney's *Desperate Housewives* could be the fest's guests of honor.

At the same time, the American Kass Thomas Corbelli, deputy director of the Industry section — which includes a market with stands — said that Walt Disney studios will possibly be partners for the Industry portion of the event (July 5-8), which, as usual, will be held at the Lumsa complex.

Last year's event saw more than 43,000 viewers attend its screenings, with 4,000 members of the worldwide press registered alongside the 1,000 industry participants, 90 international guests and 22 production companies. RFF's Industry window, featuring RomaTVPitching and RomaTVScreenings sessions, had more than 1,000 participants and international guests from six continents. Twenty-two television broadcasters and four national TV networks were involved in last year's Screenings, presenting over 60 productions. RomaTVPitching featured 350 meetings between producers and potential clients.

The aim of RFF is to keep the Italian industry growing through the enhancement and export of Italy's best audiovisual content — a difficult task considering that for both film and TV products, Italy's exports barely reach 20 million euro (U.S. \$25 million) per year. ●

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Broadband Revolution

(Continued from Cover)

newspaper: “The FCC’s authority to police broadband is already limited and is being challenged in court.”

Broadband is of vital importance to show business because the future of the whole entertainment industry depends on a clear broadband policy or, as it’s called in Europe, a well-defined “Digital Agenda.”

Only a few executives nowadays — mainly U.S. TV broadcasters — still ignore the fact that, soon, entertainment via electronic media will be transmitted exclusively over broadband: One Internet protocol standard for all units, be it a TV receiver, a computer screen or a palm-held device. The standard will allow for “anywhere, any place” mobile or home viewing, and for various formats: standard or high-definition; 2D or 3D. If the FCC will take advantage of the current pro-regulations environment, it even has a chance to impose anti-obsolescence provisions, where consumers finally won’t have to discard perfectly functioning electronic units due to compatibility issues with newer models. Deregulation has created a situation where radio and TV sets built in the early 1940s are still functioning, while a computer screen built four years ago is rendered useless by built-in obsolescence. Undoubtedly, this aspect will be opposed by software and hardware companies that are making billions with obsolescence.

However, in this respect, the FCC has not set a clear goal, stating only that it “has a mandate to change rules to ensure a competitive and innovative video set-top box market.”

Nevertheless, the fact that “A Plan for Broadband” is long overdue — and not only in the U.S., but worldwide — is acknowledged by virtually all sides: the one that favors more stringent regulations, and those who would like to see the rules further relaxed.

There are also different approaches to this issue, with Europe aiming at a “Digital Agenda,” with the apparent goal of regulating the utilization (for example achieving a “single digital market”), rather than the various components of the system itself, and “Digital Britain” attempting to create more regulations in order for the regulator, Ofcom, to gain new power.

On the other hand, the problem with proposals like those expressed in the *Times*, is that they’re mostly limited: they only focus on the actual broadband aspects — meaning the brick-and-mortar elements — without taking into account all the other multifaceted characteristics that comprise the broadband universe. Indeed, it is impossible to regulate broadband networks without tackling content operators and service providers. Fortunately, the FCC partially recognized

this when it stated: Many international broadband plans emphasize speeds and networks. We must also strive to use these networks more efficiently and effectively.”

For example, the *Times* lamented the fact that “fewer than 27 percent of Americans have broadband service, compared with 38 in the Netherlands. The average advertised download speed [in the U.S.] is eight Mbps; in France it’s 51.” Furthermore, the *Times*, declared that “the FCC needs Congress to approve a plan to repurpose 120 MHz of surplus TV spectrum for mobile broadband.” But the FCC’s plan also calls for reevaluating multi-casting by digital broadcasters, since many TV stations have shown little interest in taking full advantage of the extra spectrum.

Naturally, these latest provisions are contrasted by the U.S. broadcasting sector, which claims that multicasting is only at an embryonic stage, and that broadcasters already gave up 108 MHz of their spectrum when they switched to digital. Totally ignored is the fact that less than 15 percent of U.S. households actually receive TV via aerials — and they’re decreasing every day — therefore that spectrum is not necessary for broadcasting, but much needed for wireless broadband. The U.S. needs at least 500 MHz of spectrum to develop a better wireless broadband system by 2020 (300 MHz by 2015). Naturally, in order to gain access to that spectrum, broadband operators (with the help of the government that is licensing that spectrum at a fee) will have to provide TV services to those few TVHH still with aerials.

In his editorial, Prof. Benkler complained, “Prices [for broadband in the U.S.] are three to five times [higher than in France] and the highest prices among advanced economies.”

All of this is accurate. But where he errs is about the notion of “open access policy.” According to Benkler, companies that build networks should sell access to rivals then compete on the network. In some views, the arrangement proposed by Benkler would actual stifle competition, delay innovation and create stimulus for Wall Street-dictated vertical integrations for speculative purposes (which are also a threat to economies and national securities). Interestingly enough, is that Benkle himself explained this latter point. “[telcos like] AT&T and Qwest have largely abandoned their goal of bringing fiber to the home, leaving the highest-speed tiers to the cable companies.”

A more rational view is that telcos and other backbone (or pipeline) providers would be allowed to build, operate and exclusively exploit their own broadband networks in exchange for divesting from any other Internet-related businesses like content supplier and/or service provider.

In addition, broadband providers shouldn’t be horizontally integrated. For example, a cable broadband network operator should not be in the fixed broadband business and the wireless sector in the same market. In this case competition for broadband would arise from different network operators: Cable MSOs, Telcos’ DSL, Wi-Fi/Wi-Max, power lines and satellite.

This proposal would solve the “net neutrality” problems, since broadband providers will operate “dumb networks” and no-longer have to carve off bandwidth for their own TV services. Plus, a competing environment between carriers will take care of whether or not the network providers should charge a “toll” for priority service or simply provide a non-discriminatory service. In effect, good regulations will ultimately results in fewer regulations.

However, in order to optimize their investments, broadband providers will also need to have the option to operate the last mile and thus be the billing center.

This proposal would solve the “net neutrality” problems, since broadband providers will operate “dumb networks” and no-longer have to carve off bandwidth for their own TV services. Plus, a competing environment between carriers will take care of whether or not the network providers should charge a “toll” for priority service or simply provide a non-discriminatory service. In effect, good regulations will ultimately results in fewer regulations.

To achieve a broadband policy that will be effective for the next 50 years — like it lasted for the TV business before being hijacked by President Bill Clinton’s 1996 Telecommunications Act — is not as complicated as one might think. The roadblocks only exist because, right now, there are conflicting interests that created them.

In a comparable situation, let’s imagine one company that owns a highway, a trucking company and rest areas on the same route. Would this company be willing to have other trucking companies

crisscross its road or have independently-owned rest stops? Would this company facilitate the construction of competing parallel roads? And, finally, would the consumer benefit from this company also owning rail transport in the same route?

Broadband is in a similar situation. Once this type of highway (in our case, a network or a backbone) is spun off from all other conflicting activities, companies will focus on the core business of monetizing the most effective and most efficient superhighway.

One current example of the business model envisioned for broadband is offered by the electrical utility sector, which prior to 1990 was made up of vertically integrated monopolies. This sector was split into power suppliers (power plants or generators), transmission lines, and distribution providers (the equivalent of the last-mile in the broadband business). In general financial terms, transmission cost represents seven percent of the total energy bill, while distribution cost is 24 percent.

One past example is offered by the television business prior to deregulation, when the role of each player was well defined, regulated and protected (indeed, it was like having a license to print money). Under that scheme all the companies made money: The TV networks by selling advertising without financial risks on programs licensed from producers. Producers made money on syndication, utilizing a daypart carved out of the network schedule.

The FCC has set 2020 as the U.S. goal for a nationwide broadband system at download speeds of 100 Mbps. Providing broadband nationally is very feasible, since today 290 million Americans (95 percent of the population) have access to terrestrial, fixed broadband infrastructure with a minimum download speed of four Mbps.

The goals of any broadband agenda should be at least tenfold:

1. Increase competition.
2. Fair competition.
3. Spearhead innovation.
4. Open standards, interoperability and anti-obsolescence.
5. Open and neutral Internet.
6. Robust broadband service.
7. Optimize resources.
8. Monetize all levels and stimulate investment.
9. Security: Against fraud and man-made disasters, like nuclear blasts, which paralyze digital transmissions, and cyber-terrorism. Plus, Consumer protection (also called “digital user rights”) that includes anti speculative rides on basic infrastructures.
10. Copyright clearance and management, including limiting content exclusivity contracts (in order to prevent de-facto cartels or dominant positions).

Basically, in order to achieve the best results on all sides, the broadband business has to be clearly defined and divided and



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BeyondContent

The Tax Incentives

(Continued from Cover)

outside of a studio lot. This means that he is one of the foremost authorities on the amount of shooting that goes on in L.A. And until 2009, Audley reported, those numbers were becoming worrisome.

The reason for Audley's concern was that from 1996 to 2008, Los Angeles saw its number of shooting days for film and TV productions drop from 14,000 to 7,000, a whopping 50 percent reduction. It wasn't that fewer movies were being made (about 300 have been consistently released annually since '96); it was that California had no production incentives for filmmakers. These "runaway productions," as they came to be called, were being lured to other states — and Canada — that offered them tax breaks and refunds.

Filmmaking is an expensive business. Typical budgets are in the millions of dollars, and the risk involved is huge. And, as any moviegoer can attest, there's no guarantee that a movie is going to come out well. That's why producers look for any break they can get on the cost of production. Such money-saving opportunities often come in the form of production incentive packages — or state governments offering producers tax breaks to make movies in their states.

Historically, California did not have a need for a film production tax incentive program. With its wealth of trained professionals, open spaces and fantastic weather, it was, for many years, the natural choice for shooting on location. But the game changed in the mid-90s, when Canada began offering subsidies for filmmakers, and producers began heading north of the border. Though they brought much of their talent with them, locals were often hired and equipment rented from Canadian houses. Money that could have gone back into the California economy was going into Canadian coffers.

Then the recession put the nail in the coffin. L.A. production declined at a steady pace over the next decade. When the financial crisis hit at the end of the 2000s, some American industries, unrelated to film and TV, were essentially ruined. But the States weren't going to take it lying down. Their solution? Attract business from the still-thriving entertainment industry to pump money into state economies, create jobs and drum up tourism.

States like Michigan, which was leveled by the demise of the auto industry, enacted production incentive



Lisa Strout of the New Mexico Film Office

legislature to attract film crews. When it passed the plan in 2008, it was the aim of the Michigan government to have the most aggressive incentive program in the country. Filmmakers like local boy Michael Moore, who sojourned to the Great Lake State to make movies, stood to receive a refund of 42 percent of their spending.

According to Ken Droz at the Michigan Film Office, the program is paying off. "The results have been quite substantial," he said. "In the first nine months, 35 projects were made, including documentaries, reality shows, features and episodic shorts. The gamut. The total gross spend was \$125 million in 2008. And last year those figures were increased to 52 projects with a gross spend of \$223 million."

It wasn't just Michigan jumping on the tax refund bandwagon. By 2008, 45 states had thrown their hats into the incentive ring, and California was not among them. Until finally, it was.

In February 2009, California passed a refund plan of its own. Perhaps pressured by the state's most profitable industry, perhaps spurred on by a governor (former actor Arnold Schwarzenegger) who is particularly sensitive to the issue, California enacted legislation that offered a credit of 20-25 percent of money spent by productions.

So why did California hold out so long? "There's concern in many of the states that they're losing money on these tax incentive programs," said Audley, elaborating that there's not a lot of data out there to show that the plans are worthwhile. Michigan's Droz likewise pointed to a dearth of data as the reason why state government might be hesitant to take the tax credit plunge. "It's too early to measure whether [our program] has shown a net profit to the state. We don't have any real studies yet." Nevertheless, by the fourth quarter of 2009, production days in L.A. had already increased by 13 percent.

With production in California now incentivized, it seems that it would be game over for other states. But Pacey

Foster, a professor of Management and Marketing at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, is of the opinion that the situation is much more complicated than that. Foster, who along with fellow UMass professor David Terkla, recently conducted an in-depth study of the film and television business in Massachusetts, believes that other states are increasingly competing with the country's traditional production centers. Massachusetts, they found, has the fifth-highest film and television industry growth rate in the nation.

Foster's approach to the idea of new production hubs is one of realism. In an interview with *VideoAge*, he cautioned that not every town in America had the potential to become the next Hollywood. "I don't think you can win with every state in this," he said. "You have to have a crew, equipment, post-facilities, etc. You have to look at what the factors are that really make states viable as production centers. Which factors matter most and at what times? A lot of work needs to go into these."

Though Foster's study proved that production is booming in his home state, he said that the nature of the production is rarely big, glossy feature films. "It's not just about Hollywood," he said. "It often turns into a 'Hollywood East' thing, and yeah, that's one that that could happen. Or we could become the nonfiction cable production center of the country. The state is going gangbusters doing PBS-type stuff. So that's not really about Hollywood." And although feature films help develop the local crew base, Foster said the stats show that most of the tax credits are being claimed by commercials.

Further complicating matters is the fact that without a pool of local artists, production incentive programs may not be able to sustain themselves. Especially with feature films, the trend has been that a production company from L.A. breezes in for a few days of shooting with a crew from California, and then returns home to complete post-production. While they are in town, they pump



Paul Audley of Film L.A.

money into the local economy, but it is by no means a self-sustaining industry.

Lisa Strout, who heads the New Mexico Film Commission, said her challenge has been to encourage the local talent so that funds don't just go to L.A. production companies looking for a tax break. "Our goal is to nurture the local talent," she said. "So it's not just the technical crews being based out of New Mexico. We're trying to nurture the directors, actors, producers and writers so there's that form of sustainability." But have these efforts worked? "We don't know how many local production companies have cropped up," she said. "But it's definitely growing."

For now, it looks like Anytown, U.S.A. is unlikely to usurp Los Angeles as the country's production hub. Still, as a means of boosting the local economy, production tax breaks may prove to be a good idea. As L.A. Films' Audley pointed out, "With the film industry, you don't have to wait to build a factory to start building cars," he said. "They can be there tomorrow and start making movies." ●

Historically, California did not have a need for a film production tax incentive program. With its wealth of trained professionals, open spaces and fantastic weather, it was, for many years, the natural choice for shooting on location. But the game changed in the mid-90s, when Canada began offering subsidies for filmmakers, and producers began heading north of the border.

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BeyondContent

Kerry Packer on Paying Little: "Norman, After All, It's My Money"

BY NORMAN HOROWITZ

Herb Lazarus, my friend and associate, and I once made a secret deal with Nine Network Australia's Len Mauger for \$8 million. Many years later, Herb, Len and I were having dinner and Len told us that he had the authority to pay us \$10 million and was praised by his boss for saving \$2 million. Herb and I replied that we too had been praised by our management, which was prepared to accept \$6 million for the deal. We all laughed. We were never sure about program prices, but then again, neither was our management.

I have worked in the content business since 1956, following a stint in the air force. I started out at Columbia pictures. In those days, when Columbia produced a movie, the powers that be had no clue whether or not people were going to pay to see it. The joke was that wonderful movies were produced in California and if they were found lacking when they arrived in New York, the shipping company should be blamed.

Television was very different. The business evolved into one where U.S. broadcasters ordered programs from production companies, which as a rule, broke even when they produced what was ordered.

Years ago, my Air Force roommate, Richard Carlton Miller, visited me in California and asked what I did for Columbia Pictures Television. I told him that I sold Columbia Pictures theatrical movies and the television content that had been made for the networks to overseas buyers and reruns of the TV stuff to local stations. He thought for a few moments and said: "Norman. You are in the 'used' film business." He astounded me, but he was correct.

Most studio management teams treated international television sales with total disdain. We were in the "ancillary rights business," meaning of secondary importance.

In the overseas television marketplace in the '60s and '70s, many U.S. companies were dishonest in that they believed that producers cheated them when they



Norman Horowitz

made content and the studios were just getting even. Many U.S. individuals were dishonest and often took kickbacks from buyers and justified it as an "off-the-books commission." Many international buyers solicited bribes. Many U.S. sellers were happy to pay bribes. Many U.S. sellers were anxious to keep their jobs, and did so by regularly selling content to people that they knew were never going to pay for it.

In those times, the supply of content far exceeded the demand. This meant that in every single TV market the buyers could pick and choose what they wanted and the distributors would whine and yell about the lack of "equity" in the prices paid, yet they would ultimately be thrilled to accept what was offered.

Explaining how these prices were reached would be a guess at this time. However, it is clear to me that the buyers made them up as they were well below what they could have afforded to pay.

I once asked a big program buyer why he thought it was okay to pay so little for shows. He smiled and said, "Because I can."

It was in the mid '70s that Kerry Packer of Australia's Nine Network told me why he wanted to buy American programming for as little as possible and sell time inside U.S. shows to advertisers for as much as possible: "After all, Norman, it's my money." ●

DISCOP

(Continued from Page 14)

audience. Bohm noted that, "the rollout of digital channels in countries such as The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Russia, has led to the launch of an increasing number of themed channels focusing on clear demographics, which, quite often is the female demographic."

This is a trend also noted by Joss Duffield, Program Sales executive EMEA, at AETN, who notes "with the proliferation of new digital channels there is an increasing demand for female skewing programming, a demand which is very well met by the addition of the Lifetime programming to our catalogue." And she also insisted that this process means, "We no longer regard Central and Eastern Europe as an emerging market."

The fourth edition of the now well-established DISCOPRO is evidence of the growing maturity of many of the region's countries. DISCOPRO is a day-long event that takes place on the day immediately prior to the market proper and is devoted to co-production. Last year, DISCOPRO introduced a pitching element to the day's proceedings, which will again be the main focus of this year's edition. The pitches will be in drama and documentary, and there are real benefits to be had for the winners. The winning projects from last year, pitched by Romania's Media Pro and Hungary's Havas Films, are both now in the final stages of funding.

Additionally, DISCOPRO 2010 will present a format session run by FRAPA, the format companies association, and featuring contributions from Grundy Light Entertainment, FremantleMedia, Absolutely Independent and Armoza Formats.

Another new innovation at this year's DISCOP East is the unveiling of DISCOP Tools, a new range of back office services designed to make the sales efforts of DISCOP attendees as efficient as possible. DISCOP Tools will link 4,000 programming and distribution executives in over 100 countries from Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

The majority of these new services will be unveiled during DISCOP East itself, but the first of the DISCOP Tools is DISCOP Tube which went live last month. The service stores, indexes and profiles content offered by distributors and allows potential buyers from more than 100 markets served by the combined DISCOP content markets to search and view this content online. ●

Broadband Revolution

(Continued from Page 22)

without crisscrossing financial interest by:

- I) The broadband highway itself (meaning the network also called the backbone or pipeline).
- II) The content providers: Producers, distributors, aggregators, search engines, P2P services and press.
- III) The service providers: ISPs, telephone companies (audio and video), virtual stores.

This way, all companies will have the possibility of making money and everyone will be interested in providing the best product at the lowest possible price.

Such a well-defined structure would result in better management of the illegal distribution of copyright-protected content over the Internet. Plus, it would solve the "fair competition" issue, like, for example, when broadband providers bundle other services, like voice and video, at a below-market costs in order to generate more broadband subscribers and drive out voice and video competition.

When multinational-multimedia corporations invoke the unwritten rules of "convergence," it's a smoke screen to obfuscate progress for the opportunity to make a quick buck to satisfy their Wall Street-dictated quarterly agendas. Convergence should not be the excuse for keeping an inefficient vertically and horizontally structured system that is also in constant danger of speculative raids. In order for broadband and digital technology to be heading towards the 21st Century, the key word has to be "divergence," which is a great tool to succeed in any core businesses.

For example, since TV stations don't need terrestrial frequencies any longer, they have to decide if they want to be in the content or in the wireless broadband business. Cable companies and telcos have to decide if they want to be in the content, service or "pipeline" business. ISPs (e.g., AOL) have to choose between being content or service providers.

Under such a well-regulated structure, the consumers, would subscribe to a broadband network (the "pipeline") of choice (based on price, speed, download allowance and convenience), be it cable, wire or wireless.

Once connected on broadband, consumers can then subscribe (for free or FEE, according to the various services' business models) to an Internet provider, which offers various Web services (these are companies such as AOL, Yahoo, etc.) and can also offer voice and video telephone services. Similarly, consumers can subscribe to a content service (for free or fee). ●

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Conferences & Events News

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My Two Cents

Alan Rusbridger, editor of *The Guardian* of London, observed that the old world in which journalists were trusted to filter and prioritize the news is now in tension with “a world in which many readers want to have the ability to make their own judgments.”

This statement reminds me of the arguments I used to have in 1979 with my former boss, Sol J. Paul, one of the great U.S. radio and TV trade pioneers, publisher of *TV/Radio Age*.

Up until that time, Sol used to put out a fantastic twice-a-month issue (that, by the way is called biweekly, not bimonthly; the latter means every other month), in which interested readers could find everything: Broadcasting news, both local and national; program syndication; new hardware; radio reports; ad agencies' new clients and campaigns; ratings; trade show reports; convention and seminar recaps. In other words, it was a real bible for the radio and television executive.

TV/Radio Age also had another distinguishing characteristic: Each story was a yarn. For our NAB Issues for example, he always pushed at least one 10-printed-page report from me.

Then, out of the blue and out of left field came *Electronic Media (EM)*, a weekly tabloid published by the folks at *Advertising Age*. It was rather thin, compared to our bible-size magazine. Most of us at *TV/Radio Age* agreed that their journalists did not really know the business and little attention was paid to it. But I was troubled. Early on I realized that those “incompetent” folks provided an incredible editorial service: In less than 16 pages (excluding the classifieds), *EM* was able to give readers the full TV biz picture for the week. One did not even have to read the stories (they were rather superficial). Just by glimpsing the headlines, readers could in a matter of minutes find out what happened that week. In other words, the *EM* editors ably sifted through all

the major news and events of the week, selected the most important ones and basically told the readers: “These are the significant issues that are most important to you.”

Their operation contrasted with Sol's philosophy of putting everything out and letting the readers pick and choose what was important to them. It was a great service-oriented attitude, except for the fact that, at that time, readers had started having little time for in-depth reports.

In addition, such an avalanche of news reports further stimulated the indecision-making process that affected most of *TV/Radio Age's* readers. What should one read first? What was most important? Which news mattered to them?

I remember going to TV executives' offices and looking at piles of *TV/Radio Age* issues carefully saved. Each one had several dog-eared pages, indicating interesting articles to be read at some point or another. The problem was that, as more time passed, one had less time to read them and, even when one was finally able to get to those stories, they were obsolete. The paradox was that



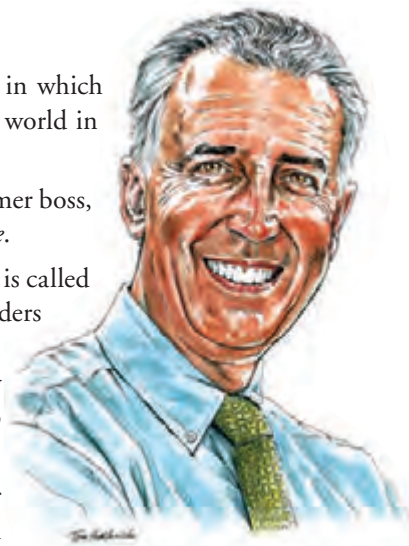
we put out the best publication ever, but that only a few people were actually able to read it.

That was the time I vigorously started arguing with my boss, who never failed to remind me that he was successful at what he did and that if the sink ain't broken, don't fix it.

But the concept really was broken and we began to sink, and that was when, in late 1980, I decided to venture out on my own with *VideoAge* (a title he suggested). However, I didn't go without first giving Sol a chance to join me as a partner. He wished me a sarcastic good-luck and promptly refused.

This preamble serves as a closing comment to the recently published book, *The Publisher* by Alan Brinkley (Alfred A. Knopf, \$35), about Henry Luce, the creator of *Time*, *Life*, *Fortune* and *Sport Illustrated*. All of them became successful because Luce was able to dig up news stories, sort through the news, identify what was important and make sense of it. This is something that print publications — particularly trade business journals like *VideoAge* — will have to remember, especially in the Internet era, when we all are inundated with an avalanche of news. Ultimately, like Luce first discovered, quality, not quantity, is what makes a publication successful.

Dom Serafini



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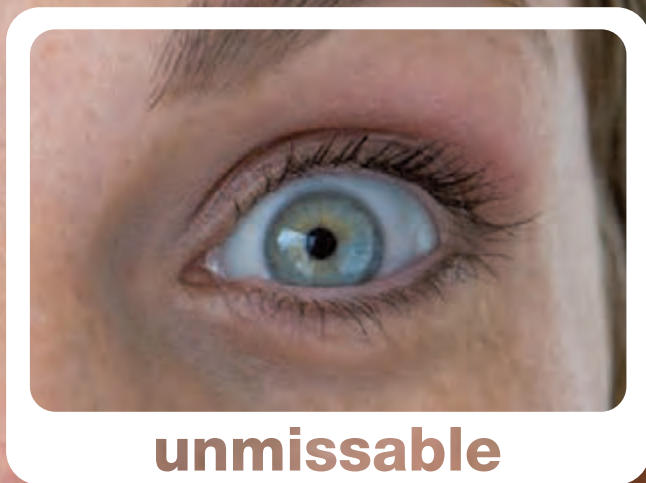
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